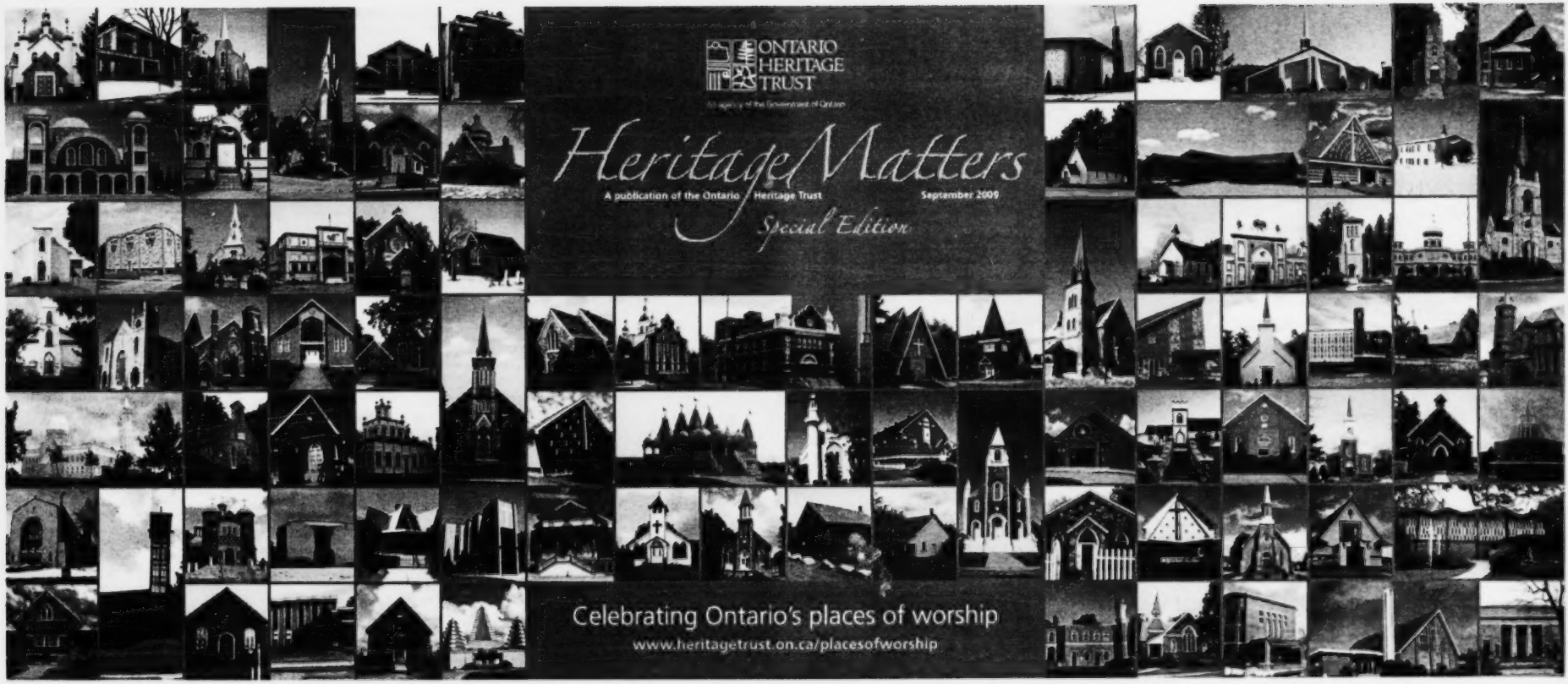
ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST
Heritage Matters
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Special Edition
Celebrating Ontario's places of worship
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HeritageMatters

ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

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Ontario

A message from The Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, Chairman

Photo courtesy of Gilbert & Associates, Toronto

Statistics on Ontario's population show a broad diversity of faith groups, perhaps the widest range in Canada, representing faiths from across the globe. Almost as diverse are Ontario's religious buildings – from intimate wood frame structures to massive cathedrals and mosques of stone, brick and marble – which vary with each region and culture. These places of worship are significant local expressions of, and testaments to, faith.

Ontario's places of worship form a substantial part of this province's cultural heritage. They tell us about the history of settlement, the role that faith plays in our culture and about our changing religious demographics.

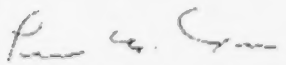
They also play a key role in Ontario's communities. In addition to their religious role, they act as community and cultural hubs, accommodate local social services and bring people together, offering assistance when times get difficult.

Historic places of worship, however, are increasingly at risk. Older buildings have fallen into disrepair due to deferred maintenance. In addition, many Christian congregations are decreasing in numbers while other faith groups are growing rapidly. In the face of these challenges, a growing number of faith communities are selling their properties, consolidating and sharing facilities or modifying their buildings to meet changing needs.

This problem is not unique to Ontario. Provinces nation-wide are reporting similar challenges in conserving historic religious architecture. Decision makers in faith communities have identified challenges in maintaining their buildings and in finding appropriate adaptive reuse options. The Trust continues to work with other provinces, organizations and individuals to share information and to assist one another in developing meaningful tools and resources.

The Ontario Heritage Trust wants to assist communities and faith groups in being proactive in protecting the significant heritage elements of their places of worship. Since 2006, with financial assistance from the Ontario Ministry of Culture, the Trust has been closely studying emerging trends in religion and the preservation and adaptation of the province's religious heritage, and developing an extensive inventory of Ontario's places of worship. The inventory is a public resource that will assist academics, community planners, faith groups and governments to identify, evaluate, preserve, use and reuse the religious buildings in their communities.

I invite you to celebrate these significant structures with us. Visiting and using Ontario's places of worship will keep them alive and viable to ensure they will continue to play an important and active role in communities across Ontario.

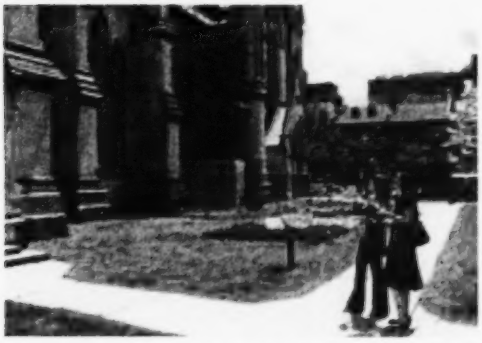


The Ontario government is proud to support the Ontario Heritage Trust's work in obtaining and developing a public inventory of Ontario's places of worship. The Trust's new inventory will serve as an important tool in understanding the scope of Ontario's religious heritage, while providing an opportunity for visitors to explore and identify significant elements of these important places.

Aileen Carroll, Ontario Minister of Culture

Launching the Places of Worship Inventory

By Richard Moorhouse



Trust Researcher Erin Semande (left) and planner Laura Hatcher conducting fieldwork for Ontario's Places of Worship Inventory

Survey, documentation and research – these are the first steps in the conservation process. How can decisions be made about our heritage without first acquiring a comprehensive understanding of its breadth, history and condition? For several years, the Ontario Heritage Trust has been assembling critical information on the province's religious architecture – specifically its houses of worship. This special edition of *Heritage Matters* highlights some of the key issues arising from, and addressed by, Ontario's Places of Worship Inventory.

The Trust has assembled documentation on thousands of churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and meeting houses, as well as historic persons, events and themes spanning more than 85 religious traditions and over 400 years of Ontario's history. The inventory is as inclusive as possible, but for pragmatic reasons we have limited the study to purpose-built houses of worship more than 25 years old. Some of these sites have already been identified by federal, provincial and municipal governments; others have been recognized by architectural historians, local plaques and markers, walking tours and Doors Open Ontario events. The vast majority of these identified places of worship, however, are unknown and unappreciated outside their immediate communities. They include vernacular masterpieces, postwar gems of modern architecture and new architectural forms and expressions associated with the diverse range of faiths that reflect and contribute to Ontario's remarkable multicultural society.

The information in the inventory has been collected from a variety of public sources, including: municipal, provincial and federal heritage inventories; local histories and architectural publications; Doors Open Ontario participation; local walking tours and commemorative programs. These and other secondary sources have been augmented by fieldwork and photography.

Fieldwork, undertaken in every region of the province, includes sites still in religious use as well as former places of worship that have been converted to new uses, such as theatres, community centres, museums, galleries, retail stores and residences.

The Places of Worship Inventory is a work in progress. It is designed to be participatory, and we encourage the public to tell us more about the sites listed. Aspects of the project will be launched in phases on the Trust's website as additional sites are inventoried and research continues, with feedback from our partners, local historians, faith communities and the public.

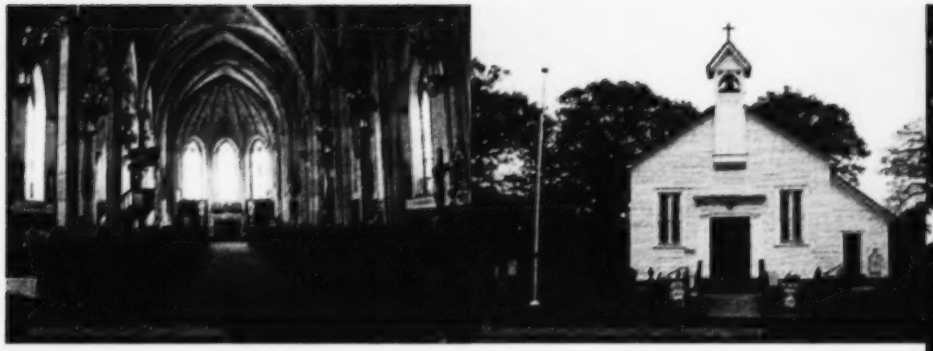
The Trust is pleased to launch this new resource. We hope it will prove useful to academics and researchers, owners and property managers, heritage advocates and planners. Most significant, the inventory provides objective, useful information that will help municipal councils make decisions about protecting the province's religious heritage.

I wish to thank the Ministry of Culture for its financial assistance and ongoing support for the development of this significant inventory and planning resource. As well, I wish to thank the many students, municipal partners, volunteers and members of faith communities who have shared information with us to make this unprecedented inventory so successful. I encourage you to visit **www.heritagetrust.on.ca/ placesofworship** to find out more about Ontario's impressive religious history and places of worship.

Richard Moorhouse is the Executive Director of the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Ontario's rich religious heritage

By Wayne Kelly



King Vaughan Quaker Meeting House, Newmarket

"Although the churches established during the early period of British rule were of different denominations, their congregants shared common linguistic, cultural and political experiences that brought them together."

From the First People who for thousands of years conducted religious and cultural ceremonies at places they believed held spiritual significance, to subsequent arrivals who brought their own beliefs and values and congregated at the new places of worship they established, each phase of Ontario's settlement and growth has enriched the province's religious heritage.

Nearly 400 years ago, when the French arrived in what is now Ontario, they set out to establish political and trade relations with the First Nations. The French also attempted to persuade, sometimes successfully, the land's inhabitants to adopt their Roman Catholic beliefs. Samuel de Champlain attended the first Roman Catholic mass celebrated in Huron country by Recollet Father Joseph Le Caron on August 12, 1615, at the Huron fortress of Carhagouha, four kilometres northwest of modern Ste Croix. Roman Catholic Church in Lafontaine (today, the Carhagouha Cross marks the site).

In 1639, French Jesuit missionaries began construction of Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons, which became the first European settlement in Ontario, on the Wye River near Georgian Bay. Devastation from war and disease led the Jesuits to burn the settlement in 1649, but the French moved to the interior of the province and continued their political and trade activities and missionary work.

With the fall of New France in 1763, the French influence in Ontario diminished. No churches from the French era have survived in the province. Subsequent French-speaking settlers from France and Quebec, however, built communities and churches that preserved the legacy of French Roman Catholicism in Ontario. Notable examples include Assumption Church in Windsor, which contains a 1787 hand-carved wooden Baroque pulpit, the Martyrs' Shrine in Midland and the Nativity Church in Cornwall.

Some of Ontario's oldest churches date from the province's Loyalist period. In 1783, following the American Revolution, American colonists who had remained loyal to the British Crown resettled in southern Ontario along the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes, founding communities near Cornwall, Kingston, Niagara, Windsor and elsewhere. Their presence marks the beginning of the strong British influence on Ontario's political, cultural and religious institutions.

Loyalists were both Catholic and Protestant. The range of churches from the early 19th century reflects the diversity of their faith – the Anglican Blue Church in Augusta, St. Andrew's Presbyterian in Williamstown, Hay Bay Methodist in Adolphustown and St. Andrew's Roman Catholic in St. Andrew's West. Some early churches served British military garrisons – such as Christ Church at Amherstburg, serving Fort Malden – and St. James-on-the-Lines Garrison Church in Penetanguishene. Another important example of an early Catholic church can be seen in the ruins of St. Raphael's in South Glengarry.

Although the churches established during the early period of British rule were of different denominations, their congregants shared common linguistic, cultural and political experiences that brought them together. During the 19th century, for many British emigrants and Loyalists, religious activities were closely linked with loyalty and with political, economic and military pursuits.

Pacifist religious groups such as Mennonites and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) came to Ontario after the American Revolution to avoid military service and persecution, settling in the Quinte and Niagara areas. Additional Quaker settlements were established after 1800 in King Township, Northern Whitchurch Township, Yarmouth Township and Norwich. The Quakers promoted peace, temperance and social service, and took a leading role in the Underground Railroad. Their churches were simple undecorated wood structures that implied a rejection of the types of religious buildings erected by the larger Christian denominations. The Children of Peace or Davidites, who broke from the Quaker faith in 1812, established a particularly beautiful temple at Sharon in 1825-31. A notable example of an early Mennonite meeting house is the 1820 Reesor Meeting House in Markham.

During the 19th century, new towns and villages developed throughout Ontario, spreading inland from the Great Lakes and major waterways. Large urban centres coalesced at places like Toronto, Kingston and London. Although agriculture remained

important to Ontario, manufacturing and industry brought energy and drive to economic expansion. But it was people – successive waves of immigrants from Britain, the United States and parts of Europe – who fueled the province's dynamic growth.

During this period, the population continued to be largely of British origin or descent, although Aboriginals, Blacks, French, Germans and Americans also figured prominently in the province's history. Wherever people settled, they built churches – often as a priority. As communities prospered and grew, they replaced their first, usually rudimentary log or wood-frame churches with larger and more specialized buildings appropriate to the particulars of their faith. Anglicans erected piercing steeples, Presbyterians stout stone monoliths, Catholics tall prominent landmarks, Methodists modest wooden or brick buildings and so on. Although the face of religion in 19th-century Ontario was still largely British and Christian, its expression in places of worship was quite varied.

Some of Ontario's most striking religious architecture stems from this period. St. James Cathedral in Toronto overlooks a stately public park. A number of churches in places like Brockville and Brantford flank county courthouses, helping to frame impressive public spaces. Others, such as those in Goderich, anchor downtown cores and main streets. Rural churches that stand as beacons of light amid furrowed fields include Marsh Trinity Anglican in Cavan-Monaghan Township and Lingelbach United in Perth East Township.

In central and northern Ontario – where towns developed around port lands, sprang up along railways or grew from industries such as mining or lumbering – churches were often seen as the focal point of community life and a counterpoint to vice and sin. In the port town of Owen Sound, the four churches at the intersection known as "Salvation Corners" were a stone's throw from "Damnation Corners," where four hotels once stood.

Many congregations established in the province's early days have survived, even though their original places of worship have not. For instance, the first Jewish congregation in Ontario, Toronto Hebrew Congregation Holy Blossom, was founded in 1856. And St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Dundas serves one of the oldest German parishes in Ontario, dating from 1784.

While early Canadian immigration policies typically favoured people from Britain and western Europe, at certain times during the 19th and 20th centuries Canada opened its doors to labourers from others parts of central and eastern Europe. Often these people had been driven from their homelands by political turmoil or other adverse conditions. Enticed to Canada by offers of free land and hopes of prosperity, they arrived to face new hardships. Many could not speak English or communicate with government officials. They were allotted land in remote areas, unreachable by road and sometimes unsuitable for farming. They endured poverty, hunger and cold. Although they came from different countries, spoke different languages and settled in different parts of Ontario, each group brought its own sense of community and cultural identity. Wherever they settled, they built churches and synagogues to worship in their own languages and according to their own faiths.

At Wilno in Renfrew County, Polish immigrants settling along the Opeongo Road established the Polish-speaking parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1875. In 1895, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Wilno opened its doors. It serves Wilno's Polish community to this day. Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe settled in west Toronto during the late 19th century, building the Knesseth Israel Synagogue in 1911. The Adath Jeshurun Congregation in Ottawa built its first synagogue in 1904. Like many early Jewish congregations, both Knesseth Israel and Adath Jeshurun worshipped in private homes or elsewhere until they could afford to build a place of worship. In 1930, Slovak immigrants settled at Bradlo in northern Ontario, where they built a Roman Catholic church in 1933. Italians, Portuguese, Greeks, Macedonians and others arrived in successive waves of immigration, establishing churches in urban centres such as Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor and elsewhere. Santa Ines-St. Agnes Church in Toronto was built in 1913 to serve an Italian community. Today, it serves a Portuguese community. In northern Ontario, Ukrainian immigrants founded churches at Timmins, Kirkland Lake and Sudbury, and Finnish immigrants established places of worship in the Thunder Bay district. These immigrant groups dramatically expanded Ontario's religious heritage.

More recently, Canada has welcomed immigrants from around the world, bringing an exciting diversity of faith groups to Ontario. The London Muslim Mosque opened in 1964 as Ontario's first purpose-built mosque. The Vishnu Mandir in Richmond Hill is the first purpose-built and architecturally accurate Hindu temple in the province. The Shiromani Sikh Society built Ontario's first permanent gurdwara in Toronto in 1969. Many Buddhists have adapted homes and storefronts to house places of worship – the

Rivvoche Tibetan Buddhist Temple in Toronto is located in a former piano showroom. Christian congregations of Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese Canadians are revitalizing older churches.

Today, Ontario's places of worship represent not only the province's rich religious heritage, but also the extraordinary cultural diversity of its successive inhabitants, vibrant people whose traditions and values continue to enliven and enhance our society.

Wayne Kelly is the Ontario Heritage Trust's Manager of Public Education and Community Development.

Christ Church and the Queen Anne Silver

By Kathryn McLeod

Located in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory on the Bay of Quinte, Christ Church houses a silver communion service dating to 1712. This remarkable service represents an intersection of spiritual and political alliances that led to the creation of the Tyendinaga Territory in the late 18th century and to the construction of Christ Church some years later. It also serves as a reminder of the important connection between Ontario's First Nations and Loyalists.

In 1710, a group of Mohawk chiefs from upper New York travelled to England to inform Queen Anne of their desire to become Christians. In response, the Queen arranged for construction of a chapel for the Mohawk people at Fort Hunter in the Mohawk Valley, New York. In 1712, she presented them with an eight-piece silver communion set for their new place of worship.

Christ Church Mohawk Territory

In 1775, at the start of the American Revolution, the communion set was buried at Fort Hunter to protect it from looting. Like most Mohawks, the Fort Hunter community sided with the British in this conflict. Captain John Deserontyon, the Fort Hunter chief, was part of a group that escorted the British forces' Colonel Guy Johnson to Lachine.

When hostilities ceased in 1783, the Mohawks were angered to learn that no provision had been made in the peace agreement for the return of their ancestral lands in New York. Deserontyon, Joseph Brant and other Six Nations representatives took their concerns to Governor Haldimand, who encouraged them to settle on the north shore of Lake Ontario.

Brant chose to settle along the Grand River, but Deserontyon and his people took up Haldimand's offer to relocate to the Bay of Quinte. First, however, he returned to Fort Hunter and dug up the silver communion service, finding seven of the eight pieces intact. When he and approximately 100 Mohawks arrived on the shore of Lake Ontario just west of what is now Deseronto on May 22, 1784, they held a service that included a flag-raising and a display of the silver.

By 1785, the community began construction of a small log church. When complete, it housed three pieces of the communion service; the remaining four went to the Grand River Mohawks. In 1798, the church was rebuilt, enlarged and furnished with an altarpiece containing the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in the Mohawk language, as well as a royal coat-of-arms and a bell – all gifts from King George III.

A new, more permanent Gothic Revival limestone church was constructed by 1843. It was rebuilt in 1906 following a fire that destroyed much of the interior, including the coat-of-arms, which was later replaced by Rev. Herbert Pringle. A carving of a wolf's head over the west door represents the Mohawks' Wolf Clan.

Today, the gifts of King George III and subsequent monarchs remain on display at Christ Church. The communion silver is brought out on special occasions, serving as a tangible example of the relationship among the Mohawk people, the British Crown and the land that is now Canada.

To honour its historical significance, Christ Church has been recognized as a National Historic Site and by a provincial plaque.

Kathryn McLeod is the Public Education Program Assistant at the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Churches of "New Ontario"

By Yves Frenette

In the middle of the 19th century, northern Ontario remained much as it had been under the French regime – a region of Catholic missions ministering to First Nations and a supply area for furs. More or less abandoned after the eventual deaths of the Jesuits who had been there since before the English conquest, the missions took on new life during the 1840s. The northeast was chosen by the Oblates as their preferred territory for mission work, the northwest by their Jesuit colleagues.

Eventually the development of forestry, mining and then agriculture encouraged the settlement of this "New Ontario" by French-Canadians, as railways were built linking it to the southern part of the province and Quebec. Settlement started in the 1860s near Mattawa, then spread westward as far as the Sudbury area. Somewhat later, the northern shore of Lake Huron was populated. At the same time, French-Canadians migrated towards Timiskaming and the Great Clay Belt (which runs from Kapuskasing to the Quebec border). Wherever French-Canadians settled, they brought their strong religious convictions.

More than a religious organization, the parish was the settlers' main social link, as well as their primary physical reference point. Institutions established around the parish included the school, hospital and credit union. As well, a myriad of activities took place at the church – recitals, bazaars and patriotic speeches. This framework provided French-Canadians with an identity and a sense of security. For their religious and political leaders, it guaranteed "survival of the race." Many people of the day would have agreed with the Nipissing member of Parliament, Dr. Raoul Hurtubise, when he described the parish of Verner and its priest in 1939: "We are now arriving in Verner, a parish that is completely French Canadian and Catholic. It's as if we were in the Province of Quebec. This parish is headed up by my good friend Father O. Racette, who is full of ideals, but who at the same time has a practical mind and who serves his flock from all points of view."

No fewer than 67 French-language or bilingual parishes were established by the ecclesiastic authorities in northern Ontario before 1930. Some of the parishes had been preceded by a mission.

Ste-Anne-des-Pins, Sudbury

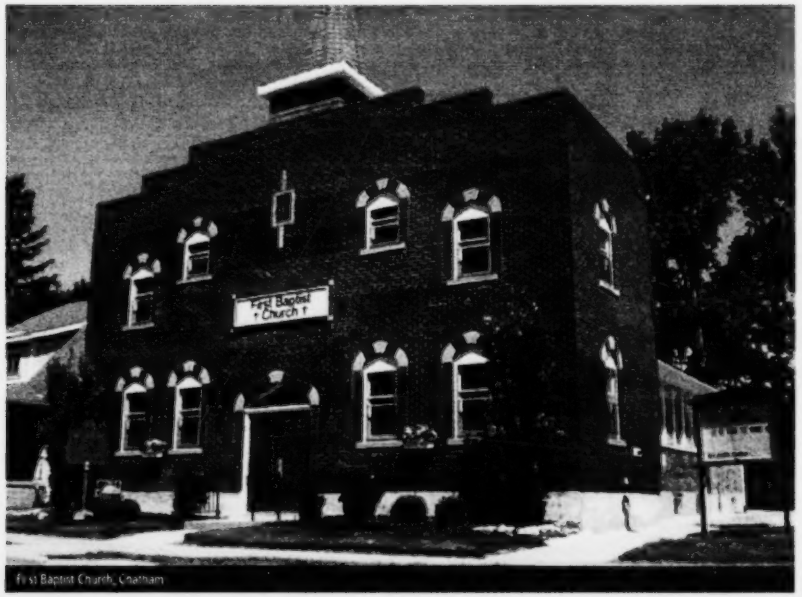
Early wooden chapels that also served as presbytery and school can still be found in the area. But as soon as there were enough members, a real church was established and constructed out of stone or brick – be it a small building in the countryside or a monumental edifice in an urban centre.

Today, the social function of parishes has changed in "New Ontario" as elsewhere in the province, but church steeples still reach for the sky above Franco-Ontarian cities and villages.

Yves Frenette is the Director of the Centre for Research on French-Canadian Culture at the University of Ottawa.

Religious freedom in the promised land

By Steven Cook and Wilma Morrison



First Baptist Church, Chatham

Nathaniel Dett Memorial Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church, Niagara Falls

Nazrey African Methodist Episcopal Church, Amherstburg

Eli Johnson toiled on plantations in Virginia, Mississippi and Kentucky before making his bid for freedom in the "promised land" – the term used by Underground Railroad refugees to describe Canada. As punishment for leading weekend prayer meetings, his owner threatened to stake him to the ground and apply 500 lashes of the whip. Eli pleaded, "In the name of God, why is it that I can't, after working hard all the week, have a meeting on Saturday evening? I am sent for to receive 500 lashes for trying to serve God."

Prayer meetings were more than an occasion to practise religious beliefs; they also gave enslaved Blacks a sense of community. So, it is no surprise that religion played a pivotal role in the establishment of early Underground Railroad refugee settlements in Ontario. The church was a settlement's heart and soul, where refugees could come together to share experiences, offer support and give praise.

The minister, usually the most educated person in the community, became the leader and often a role model for youth. Churches provided sanctuary until new arrivals could be integrated into the community. Ministers might also provide assistance in court for arrested and jailed runaways.

Early Underground Railroad refugee settlements centred primarily around three Christian denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, British Methodist Episcopal and Baptist.

The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church grew out of the Free African Society, established by Richard Allen, Absalom Jones and others in Philadelphia in 1787 to protest slavery and discrimination. In 1794, the first of these churches, Bethel AME, was dedicated in Philadelphia, with Rev. Allen, a former slave from Delaware, as pastor.

The Nazrey AME Church in Amherstburg, Ontario, founded by Bishop Willis Nazrey, was built in 1848 by former slaves and free Blacks. Constructed of hand-laid fieldstone – and now part of the North American Black Historical Museum – it is a proud example of the many small Black churches found in early Ontario.

With the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which facilitated the recapture and extradition of runaway slaves, travel to and from the United States became increasingly difficult for Blacks. The AME annual conference was held in the United States, and Canadian delegates were hesitant to cross the border. They proposed a new entity closer to home, and in 1856 the British Methodist Episcopal (BME) Church was formed.

As early as 1814, congregations had been organized in St. Catharines, Hamilton and Niagara Falls by Darius Dunham, the first Methodist circuit preacher in the area. By 1836, the Black community in Niagara Falls had built a small chapel. This simple Upper Canada Georgian structure, one of the oldest Black Methodist churches in Ontario, still serves as the spiritual centre of the Niagara Falls Black community. In 1983, it was renamed the Nathaniel Dett Memorial Chapel BME Church, in honour of R. Nathaniel Dett, renowned musician, composer, poet, choral conductor and former member of the church.

The first known Baptist minister in Canada was Elder William Wilks. Born in Africa, later sold into slavery in the United States, he eventually escaped to Amherstburg. He preached to other refugees, and was ordained in 1821. Around the same time, Washington Christian, a refugee from New York, formed Black Baptist congregations in Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. In 1841, all Baptist churches in Canada West joined together to form the Amherstburg Regular Missionary Baptist Association.

By this time, the Chatham area as well had become a mecca for refugees from slavery – one-third of the area's residents were emancipated Blacks. By 1841, they had established a place of worship; 10 years later, they had built First Baptist Church.

The survival of many of the early churches built by these freedom seekers speaks to the importance the churches played in their communities. It also speaks to the strength and commitment of the congregants, formed from years of bondage under a system that prohibited personal expression.

Eli Johnson's sentiments echo those of countless freedom seekers who clung to their faith and their undying hope for a brighter day: "I felt so thankful on reaching a land of freedom that I couldn't express myself. When I look back at what I endured, it seems as if I had entered a Paradise. I can here sing and pray with none to molest me. I am a member of the Baptist church, and endeavour to live a Christian life."

Steven Cook is the Trust's Site Manager at Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site in Dresden. Wilma Morrison is the Site Manager at the Nathaniel Dett Memorial Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church.

Toronto's synagogues: Keeping collective memories alive

By Jennifer Drinkwater

Ontario Heritage Trust provincial plaque unveiled at Knesseth Israel Synagogue on September 6, 2001.

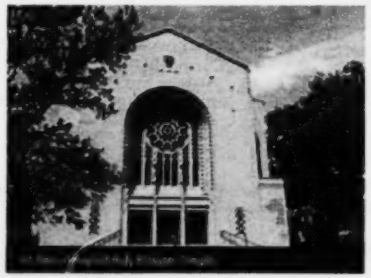
Collective memory is cultural memory – what is remembered about an event by a social or cultural group that experienced it and by those to whom members of the group have passed on their memories. Collective memories form part of a community's identity, its heritage.

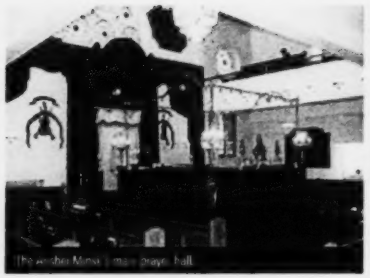
Places, practices and objects can be "sites of memory," which can also become part of a community's heritage. Sites of memory can include physical places like archives, museums, places of worship, cemeteries and memorials, concepts embedded in mottos and practices like commemorations and rituals, or objects such as inherited property, monuments, emblems, texts and symbols. The memories themselves can be personal, connected with an individual's life history, or cognitive, not necessarily about the past, but something learned that helps an individual or a group interpret the past, present and future. Collective memory is conveyed and maintained by rituals and other cultural activities of commemoration.

Places of worship such as Knesseth Israel, Holy Blossom and Anshei Minsk synagogues in Toronto play vital roles in the cultural memory of the city, the individual communities in which they reside and the religious groups that have built and worshipped in them.

Knesseth Israel, also known as the Junction Shul, after its neighbourhood, is the oldest purpose-built synagogue still used as a synagogue in Ontario. Architects Ellis and Connery designed the building, and construction began in 1911. The exterior is simple, but the interior walls are elaborately decorated with scenes representing the Land of Israel and musical instruments played by the Levites in the Temple. The domed ceiling is painted like a blue sky with clouds, and incorporates the signs of the zodiac representing the months of the Hebrew calendar. The millwork was reputedly done by cabinetmakers from the nearby Heitzman piano factory. The building retains remnants of its days as an Orthodox synagogue. There is a separate women's gallery, the remains of the former *mikva* (ritual bath) in the basement, a chapel that was used for daily services and a schoolroom. Throughout the building, fragments of memories are on display: photographs, a newspaper article, plaques and a list of fallen soldiers who were members of the congregation. In 2001, the Ontario Heritage Trust recognized the synagogue with a provincial plaque, supported by local philanthropists Joey and Toby Tanenbaum in memory of their grandparents.

Holy Blossom Temple is home to the first Jewish congregation in Canada West (Ontario), established in 1856. For 20 years, it held services in a rented space above Coombe's drugstore at Yonge and Richmond streets. In 1876, members built their first synagogue, by 1897 a new one was erected on Bond Street. The present Holy Blossom Temple on Bathurst Street, designed by architects Chapman and Oxley, officially opened in 1938. Inside, the memories of the congregation are proudly displayed. Photographs of past presidents, rabbis, cantors and other prominent members of the congregation dating back to 1856 hang on the walls. Interpretive panels relate the congregation's history. Holy Blossom has its own archives, which contains board minutes dating back to 1856 and temple bulletins starting from 1923-24. The archives also keep newspaper articles about the synagogue, prayer books and Torahs. Their collection includes a *yad* (a pointer used on the Torah scroll) given to them from the Asher family in Montreal. The *yad*'s inscription is said to be the source of the temple's name. In 2001, the Ontario Heritage Trust erected a plaque at Holy Blossom commemorating Ontario's first Jewish congregation.





The Anshei Minsk main prayer hall.

Exterior of Knesseth Israel Synagogue, also called "The Junction Shul."

The Anshei Minsk synagogue is also an important site of memory. Toronto's Kensington Market, a National Historic Site, is known for its diverse ethnic history. In the 1920s and 1930s, the market was predominately Jewish. Anshei Minsk's building at 10 St. Andrew Street was designed by architects Kaplan and Sprachman, and completed by 1930. The design is similar to other synagogues in the area. Interior paintings include a passage from *Pirkei Avot* and klezmer instruments. Members have donated tables, bookcases and cabinets in memory of their loved ones. Relatives' names in Yiddish adorn the basement walls. The Jewish presence in Kensington started to decline in the 1950s and early 1960s, but Anshei Minsk remained open. By the late 1980s, it was the only downtown synagogue offering daily prayer services. Anshei Minsk is both a reminder of how Toronto once was and an important part of the city's present dynamic.

Each of these historic places of worship is a repository for a community's collective memories, and an important part of Toronto's history.

Jennifer Drinkwater is the Archivist/ Researcher with E.R.A. Architects Inc.

A legacy of support: Faith-based community outreach in Ontario

By Alison Little

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Toronto Jewish Old Folks' Home (1918), Toronto

Members of the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Toronto, participate in an annual walkathon fundraiser for local hospitals in 2007. (Photo courtesy of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Toronto)

Reaching out to those in need has long been a part of Ontario's religious tradition. Faith-based groups offering medical and social assistance arrived with the first European missionaries and spread throughout the province. Spiritual institutions provided the earliest forms of social care, offering medical and social assistance to Ontario's less fortunate more than a century before the development of government-supported services.

Early faith-based outreach came from local congregations. In 1854, Bishop Armand-François-Marie de Charbonnel (1802-91) built the House of Providence near St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church in Toronto, housing a hospital, orphanage and home for the elderly. Similar institutions across the province, including the Sisters of St. Joseph House of Providence in Peterborough, provided orphanages and accessible medical care for residents unable to afford doctors. These organizations arose from a Victorian-era moral and religious revival among the affluent of England and North America, with a goal of improving the lives of the less fortunate through charitable and spiritual care. Focused in urban areas, their outreach efforts provided food, shelter, clothing, education, medical care and burial for the poor.

As concern for the disadvantaged grew, societies were created to manage outreach programs. Established by Frederic Ozanam (1813-53), the Catholic Society of St. Vincent de Paul opened the Conference of Charity of Our Lady of Toronto in 1850. Its members initiated the Bona Mors Society, which provided burials for Toronto's poor, and established the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Metropolitan Toronto, the Night School for Boys and the Toronto Savings Bank. Members also undertook frequent home and hospital visitations to the sick and elderly.

Post-Confederation immigration began to diversify Ontario's population, and the number of religious social outreach societies continued to grow. In 1870, the Deborah Ladies' Aid Society (today the Deborah Sisterhood) was established by Jewish women of the Anshe Sholom of Hamilton to provide social services to that city's poor. The first Jewish women's philanthropic group in Canada, it offered food and clothing to residents and immigrants. Such religious organizations were precursors of today's employment insurance, food banks, retirement homes and immigrant settlement services.

While many charitable organizations were offshoots of religious groups, the Salvation Army was a Christian denomination organized specifically to provide charitable outreach and spiritual assistance. The Army established congregations across Ontario beginning in 1882, and introduced its now-famous thrift stores, food banks, soup kitchens and shelters. The Woodstock Salvation Army, celebrating its 125th anniversary, has maintained a philosophy of "soup, soap and salvation" throughout its history, providing physical nourishment, social support and spiritual care to its charges. During the Great Depression, the Woodstock Army addressed the needs of community members struggling with poverty and addiction. The emphasis on spiritual salvation through physical health underpinned the Salvation Army's activities, but began to change as society became more secular and diverse. Religious social aid societies like the Salvation Army have had to modify their outreach programs to reflect the diverse religious backgrounds and values of the communities they serve.

Faith-based social service initiatives continued to grow throughout the 20th century, often forming links with larger secular services. With the emergence of welfare after the Depression and the arrival of universal health care in 1962, religious social aid societies continued to minister to local communities, while providing increasing aid to global charitable programs. Established in 1951, BAPS Charities, which sends medical, educational and environmental aid to Hindu communities in India, exemplifies the partnership of a large social aid institution with a local faith group. The BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Toronto also provides outreach services to the Toronto community. The charitable work of the Toronto Mandir's congregation is partnered with its international charity, extending the efforts of local religious social services to the global community.

Today, religious community services work alongside secular charities and government health and social assistance providers. Virtually every faith group and religious tradition in the province contributes to the social and physical betterment of those in need, undertaking charitable acts as a tenet of its beliefs. Faith-based charities have been a significant aspect of Ontario society, and an invaluable tool in the struggle to alleviate ignorance, poverty, illness, addiction and isolation.

Alison Little is a writer and data administrator with the Trust's Ontario's Places of Worship Inventory.

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The Woodstock Salvation Army Brass Band raised funds for charitable activities through its local performances. (Photo courtesy of Woodstock's Salvation Army Citadel)

A member of the Salvation Army's League of Mercy visits an elderly patient at a local hospital in Woodstock. (Photo courtesy of Woodstock's Salvation Army Citadel)

Places of worship in Ontario's rural cultural landscapes

By Wendy Shearer

With its associated cemetery and rural landscape, St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church is a prominent landmark

The cultural landscapes of rural southern Ontario contain a variety of heritage resources – land patterns and uses, built forms and natural features. Within these settings, places of worship are significant artifacts and placemakers. Their locations vary, from small crossroad settlements to isolated sites along the concession/sideroad grid that organizes southern Ontario's agricultural lands.

In addition to their architectural value, places of worship, which include some of our oldest buildings still in use, carry associative and contextual heritage values. They are the result of group efforts to create buildings for life's ceremonial and spiritual aspects, hence important reminders of the communities that built them. They are also tangible symbols of the social network of rural cultural landscapes, accommodating the coming together of community members for joyful celebrations and solemn ceremonies.

Many of these buildings take advantage of natural topography, using siting to reinforce their prominence. Their landmark value is evident in their distinctiveness relative to their context. St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Haldimand artfully combines architecture and site to increase its scale and presence in the landscape. This pattern, which is repeated throughout southern Ontario, contributes to the countryside's visual character.

Other places of worship are integrated into their landscape settings. Port Ryerse Memorial Anglican Church is nestled in a small shaded site in a compact rural settlement. While the board and batten building is distinct in its architecture and purpose, it shares with the surrounding residences and farm buildings a similar organic lot pattern created by the valley topography at the edge of Lake Erie. The community's history and association with the United Empire Loyalists and the War of 1812 is preserved in the gravemarkers in the church's cemetery. This church's contextual value lies in the harmonious composition of building, site and burial ground.

Religious buildings' associative value emerges in the way they represent the continuity of time and family. St. Andrew's in Buxton, a modest frame church, is highly valued as a symbolic expression of freedom and hope by both the surrounding community and descendants of the area's early settlers. Many refugees fleeing American slavery made homes for themselves in Buxton. Since the 1920s, their descendants from across the United States and Canada have regularly attended Buxton's homecoming celebrations.

In many rural areas, places of worship are the only structures that remain from earlier settlement, allowing the settlement's name and identity to live on. They continue to be places of contemplation, sharing, inspiration and spiritual comfort, as well as landmarks of their rural cultural landscapes, making them valuable in ways that exceed their built form.

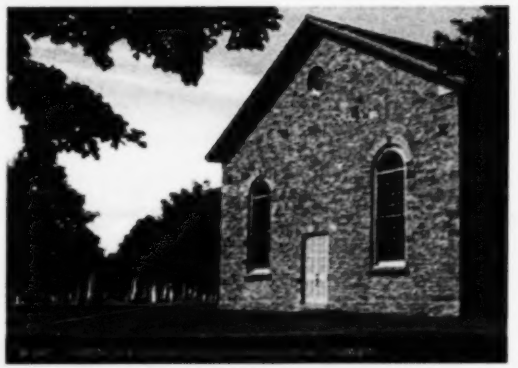
Wendy Shearer is a Landscape Architect with MHBC Planning, specializing in cultural landscapes and the restoration of historic sites. She also teaches Cultural Landscapes courses at the University of Victoria and the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts.

Enduring stewardship preserves a treasured heritage church

By Jane Burgess and Ann Link

Located just east of Beaverton, the Old Stone Church, built in 1840 by a predominantly Scottish congregation, is a simple but handsomely proportioned small Georgian church, a rare example of its type in Ontario. The church is unique in that its original exterior and interior remain untouched, as the church, originally St. Andrew's Presbyterian, was in regular use for only 30 years. The settlement it was built to serve developed closer to Lake Simcoe at Beaverton, so the congregation built a second St. Andrew's "in town," but continued to hold services in the "Old Stone Church" for Gaelic speakers and original parishioners.

The congregation's history reflects the turbulent development of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. So fractious were the disputes that the last disagreement over union with the Methodists could only be settled by the Legislative Assembly, through the Beaverton Presbyterian Church Act, 1927. This statute gave the new St. Andrew's to the newly formed United Church of Canada, and the Old Stone Church to the Presbyterian congregation, making it the only Presbyterian church in Canada owned by its congregation. The congregation eventually built yet another church in town, but maintained its commitment to the Old Stone Church.



By 1988, the church was in poor condition. As part of a fundraising drive, the Old Stone Church Trustees entered into a conservation easement with the Ontario Heritage Trust, and applied for and received National Historic Site recognition and much needed funding from provincial and federal governments. The church was fully restored in 1991. A conservation master plan was created, which included yearly, five-year, and 50-year monitoring and maintenance plans. Every year, the trustees conduct a review with the conservation architect, filling in monitoring worksheets that are kept on file by the church, the architect and the Ontario Heritage Trust. The reviews offer opportunities to identify and prioritize repairs and maintenance, and to determine whether the work can be done by donated labour or should be given to a professional conservator. The specialized work involved in staining the building's wood trim and windows is undertaken every five years, so other repairs requiring expert help are often done at that time as well.

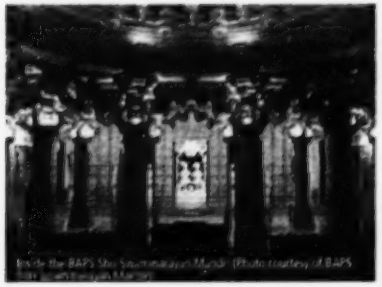
The church's maintenance fund – comprised of bequests, money raised from church activities, visitors' donations and rental fees – is managed by the trustees. Volunteers, traditionally referred to as the Old Stone Church Women, clean the church each May, and open it to the public on Sundays in July and August. Services are held on the first Sunday of each summer month.

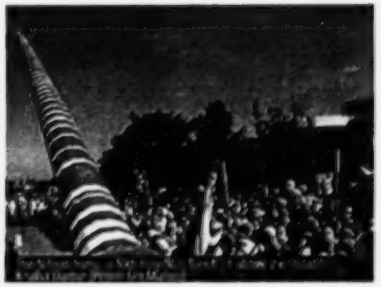
To date, the church has been self-funded, but the reshingling scheduled for 2040 may require a special fundraising drive. Of greater concern, however, is the ability of the aging congregation to continue providing caring trustees.

Jane Burgess is the Old Stone Church's conservation architect. Ann Link is one of the "enduring" church trustees.

The changing face of worship

By Laura Hatcher





The architectural style, massing, materials and date stones of a place of worship offer clues about the congregation's history and values. Likewise, the building's size and its positioning within a community tell a great deal about its congregation's influence and prominence. Many of the early Anglican churches built in Ontario were dignified in design and located at the centre of town. In contrast, the modest yet proud architecture of other early Ontario Christian places of worship tells of struggling but dedicated faith groups who rallied to make a place for themselves.

Stepping back to look at places of worship across the province, a larger story unfolds. As we scan Ontario's landscape, what do religious buildings tell us about our history and our current culture? Although many churches, synagogues and meeting houses continue to thrive, century-old places of worship sit vacant in rural areas, and in our cities grand old religious buildings are slated for demolition. These sights may imply that religion is in decline here, but a look at more recent architecture reveals that faith continues to play an important role in Ontario's society.

Canada has experienced a slow but steady decline in organized worship, starting in the 1940s and 1950s. The mid-20th century, however, also marked the onset of more liberal immigration policies, gradually admitting Jewish and Slavic immigrants. In 1951, Canada admitted a small "immigrant quota" from Asian countries in the British Commonwealth, such as India, Pakistan and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The 1950s and 1960s saw an influx of Italians, Greeks and Portuguese to Ontario, and the late 1960s saw more people of Asian and southeast Asian descent settling in the province. Many of these immigrants could not find places of worship that welcomed them or met their linguistic or spiritual needs. As a result, there were several decades of relatively "low-profile" worship in the province. Older congregations were not expanding, and many new Ontarians who lacked resources or an established community held their religious gatherings in homes, rented storefronts or warehouses.

As these groups become more established, we are seeing a renaissance of purpose-built religious architecture. The fastest growing religions in Ontario today – Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, evangelical Christianity and Orthodox Christianity – reflect immigration patterns over the last few decades.

The history of Islam in Ontario is relatively recent, and the history of Ontario mosques even more so. The Windsor Mosque, built in 1969 and one of the province's earliest purpose-built mosques, combines a modern esthetic and materials typical of North American buildings, but with traditional Islamic architectural elements, such as a minaret, a dome and an entrance flanked by pointed segmental arches. Situated in a residential suburb, it is in striking contrast to its surroundings. Large and surrounded on all sides by a parking lot, the mosque was not designed as a neighbourhood place of worship; it serves Muslims from across the region.

The Ontario Khalsa Darbar is also supported by a far reaching community. Located in Mississauga, it is a thriving Sikh gurdwara, open year-round, that welcomes tens of thousands of people through its doors on holy days. Founded in 1979, it had humble beginnings – the original gurdwara was in a trailer. But by 1989, the Sikh community had purchased land to erect its first purpose-built gurdwara in an area that was primarily industrial, but close to two major highways, allowing it to serve Sikhs from across the Greater Toronto Area. By the 1990s, a massive addition was completed. The gurdwara's architecture is a mix of the new and the traditional – elliptic domes sit atop a concrete building with clean lines and modern finishes. A Nishan Sahib, a Sikh holy flag that signals the presence of a sacred place, flies high above the gurdwara on a tall flagpole as a beacon to the faithful.

Opened in 2007, Toronto's BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir is a spectacular addition to Ontario's religious architecture. Built according to the principles of the ancient Indian Shilpa Shastras – religious texts that outline standards for Hindu sculpture and architecture – the Mandir contains no structural steel, instead relying on load-bearing stone. The building is composed of 24,000 pieces of marble, limestone and Indian pink stone, which were intricately hand-carved in India and assembled on site by craftspeople from India and over 400 volunteers.

Like the Windsor Mosque and the Ontario Khalsa Darbar, the financial, material, and community resources that went into the creation of the BAPS Mandir tell the familiar story of a community that is dedicated to honouring its traditions, while at the same time making its mark in Ontario.

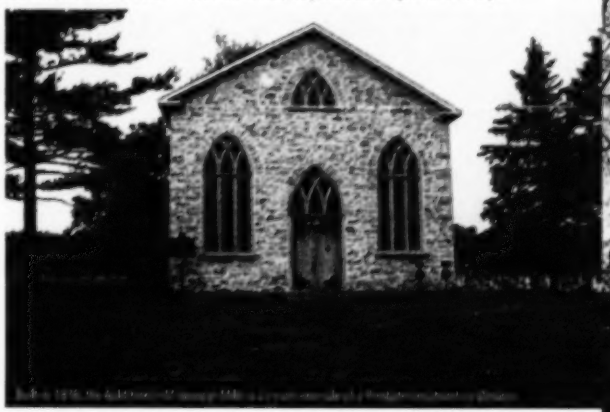
Laura Hatcher is the Planner for the Trust's Ontario's Places of Worship Inventory.

Form and function: The impact of liturgy, symbolism and use on design

By Vicki Bennett

During the 19th century, the location, physical condition and stylistic merit of churches were publicly discussed as reliable indicators of a community's value, moral fabric and work ethic. The very act of church building suggested the potential for stability, growth and even prosperity. Today, these same traits offer historians insight into a community's views on issues as varied as liturgy, church governance and political opinion.

Of the numerous Christian denominations active in 19th-century Ontario, most fit into one of two basic categories: Catholics, who were ultimately under the authority of Rome; and Anglicans and non-conformists (Protestants who were not members of the Church of England), who typically exercised more congregational independence.



Catholic church architecture, with over 1,500 years of history, was closely regulated by the Church's hierarchy. Architectural characteristics were determined by the liturgical requirements of the Catholic Eucharistic ritual. The sacrificial aspect of the Catholic mass required a sanctuary, which often took the form of a rounded apse, containing an altar. Sacristies, small ancillary structures built beside the sanctuary, housed ritual vessels and vestments between services.

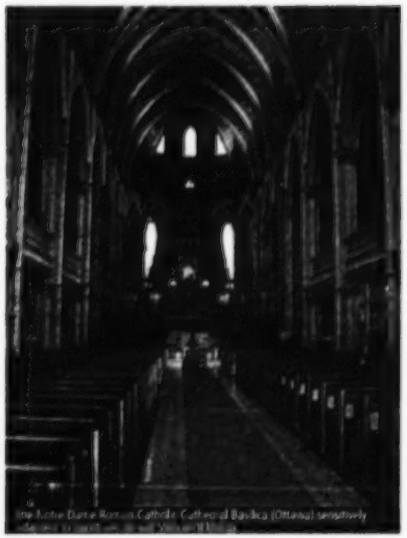
Catholics gathered in buildings with elongated central naves that accommodated ceremonial processions and side aisles that allowed for the circumambulation of the faithful through the Stations of the Cross. Devotional statuary, paintings and stained glass were all requisite to a properly finished church. While the structural and decorative style varied with the congregation's cultural and social status, the consistency of liturgical form remained a hallmark of Catholic architecture.

Anglican and non-conformist churches in Ontario began the 19th century with uniformly austere structures, due as much to religious conviction as to modest means or scarce resources. In their simplest form, these early buildings were identified as places of worship only by their high walls and large windows. Church buildings were small, and worship was focused on seeing and hearing the word of God. Ministers read scripture and preached from pulpits centred on the axis of the church. Often there was no figurative imagery or stained glass, even crosses were avoided as symbols of superstition and idolatry.

During the late 1830s and 1840s, a movement emerged in England that dramatically and irrevocably transformed Ontario's church architecture. Anglican Ecclesiologists, seeking to return to what they considered a golden era of idyllic spirituality and national purity, advocated a wholesale, archaeologically correct reinvestment in 13th-century English Gothic architecture and its symbolism. Builders were pressured to include porches, naves, chancels, vestries and octagonal stone baptismal fonts. Churches were elongated to three times their width, with low lateral walls and steeply pitched roofs. The architecture of virtually all other denominations in Ontario were influenced to some degree by this Gothic revival.

With the re-emergence of Gothic designs for religious buildings, concerns were raised about the reintroduction of rituals the medieval churches had been designed to accommodate. Faced with growing congregations and increasingly alarmed by the associations of the historic style with its Catholic past, Methodists turned their attention to a new amphitheatre-style model. Its sloping floors and second-storey balconies were reminiscent of contemporary concert halls, emphasizing the boundary between the congregation and those actively involved in the liturgy but significantly improving visibility and acoustics. The pulpit, communion table, organ and choir all enjoyed a new prominence on a raised stage-like sanctuary. These changes represented a dramatic rethinking of Methodist liturgical space, and they were soon assimilated by Presbyterians and Baptists.

The architecture of the Anglican church of St. Stephen-in-the-Field, Toronto, displays



The Notre Dame Roman Catholic Cathedral Basilica (Ottawa) sensitively

At the same time Catholics, who generally used a variant of French Gothic religious architecture, became concerned with Gothic's perceived association with Protestants. This concern, coupled with an increased commitment to papal authority following Vatican I (1862-70), led to the popularization of the Italianate style, characterized by frontal monumentality echoed in the structure of the high altar, round-headed windows and an increased use of classical detailing. Only after Vatican II (1962-65) did Catholic architecture change substantially. Façades and interiors became more intimate, celebrants faced the congregation from smaller altars near the front of the sanctuary. Such changes coincided with a "modernizing" trend that affected all denominations during the 1960s, as builders explored fresh designs and new materials. Less fortunately, many older churches were "updated" before their heritage value was fully appreciated.

Vicki Bennett is Director of Publishing for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and has written extensively on sacred space and structural styles.

Art in the church and the church in art: Work of the Group of Seven

By Erin Semande

Talented and renowned artists have long been commissioned to decorate the interiors of places of worship, where they often turn the walls and ceilings into artistic masterpieces. At the same time, places of worship have frequently been depicted by artists, who find esthetic value in the symbolism of these buildings and their placement in the human and natural landscape. These artistic traditions possess a uniquely Canadian twist when the artists are members of the Group of Seven.

Anglican Church at Magnetawan (1933) by A.J. Casson (National Gallery of Canada)

St. Anne's Anglican parish in Toronto was founded in 1862, the present church was built in 1907-08. Rector Rev. Lawrence Skey (1867-1948) was appointed to St. Anne's in 1907. His low-church point of view, independent parish ideals and interest in Toronto's art community influenced the architectural and artistic masterpiece that St. Anne's became.

Toronto-based architect William Ford Howland (1874-1948) won the competition to design the church, and chose a Byzantine Revival style unique among Anglican churches in Canada. Even with St. Anne's outstanding architecture, the most impressive feature of the church is the series of murals that adorn the interior, executed in 1923 by 10 Toronto artists – three from the Group of Seven, including J.E.H. MacDonald (1873-1932), F.H. Varley (1881-1969) and Franklin Carmichael (1890-1945). The murals' biblical scenes were a notable departure for these artists, who usually focused their artistic attention on nature; they constitute the Group's only known religious works of art. Two of the finest paintings, located in the pendentives of the church, are Varley's *Nativity* scene and MacDonald's depiction of the *Crucifixion*.

Religious icons were rarely depicted by the Group of Seven, but their paintings of church exteriors demonstrate their devotion to the outdoors. In 1926, A.J. Casson (1898-1992) joined the Group after the departure of original member Franz Johnston (1888-1949). Casson's *Anglican Church at Magnetawan* depicts St. George the Martyr Anglican Church, constructed in 1880 as an Anglican mission for the sparsely settled region. Casson painted St. George the Martyr in 1933, during a period when he was focusing on rural Ontario villages.

Casson depicted the church bathed in warm, golden sunlight amid the backdrop of a rocky yet lush landscape, capturing the church's essence – a landmark in a remote community and a marker to visitors and residents arriving by water. Today, the painting hangs in the National Gallery of Canada. The people of Magnetawan remain proud of their church and its place in Canadian art history.

Erin Semande is the Researcher for the Trust's Ontario's Places of Worship inventory.

The music of worship

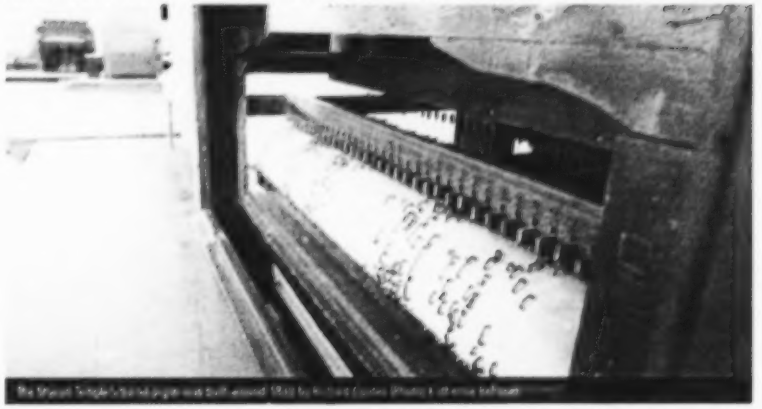
By Nicholas Holman

Goethe said that "architecture is frozen music," but why did he say this? Was it because Christian church interiors, with their columns and arches, seem to move as one walks down the nave, or because windows and walls seem to slide about and transepts to appear, then disappear, as one moves from west to east in a Latin-cross plan? But the structure itself does not move – aside from the inevitable decay that affects all buildings.

Music, in contrast, is fleeting, intangible, lifted from the silent page into four dimensions only when performed. Sounds emanating from choir, organ and other instruments resonate throughout the church, seeming to move and surround the listener, but the melodies linger only briefly once the music stops.

The role of music in Christianity has varied hugely over the centuries, from its origins in simple chants to the complexities of 16th-century composer Giovanni Gabrieli's two-choir compositions written for Saint Mark's in Venice, from a Mozart mass with orchestra to Anglican chant and the compelling hymns of reformist churches.

While vibrant hymns engage congregations in ways unthinkable in earlier centuries, as they inspire the faithful to raise the proverbial church roof, other places of worship are being adapted for concerts and performances of dance and theatre. The Sharon Temple, north of Toronto, is an example of a religious building that is musically active in new ways.



The Sharon Temple's barrel organ was built around 1832 by Richard Davies (Photo: Catherine Hoffman)

The Sharon Temple, with its striking architectural symmetry and important musical history, provides a good example of a "living" heritage building, although one no longer used as originally intended. Known for its fine acoustics, this unique central-plan, timber-frame and clapboard temple was built in 1825-31 for a small religious sect called the Children of Peace, founded by David Willson.

The Children of Peace have long since disappeared, but in 1966 the Waterloo Lutheran University Choir commissioned John Beckwith, former Dean of Music at the University of Toronto, to compose a work centred on this sect. Beckwith's libretto, *Sharon Fragments*, incorporates Willson's descriptions of his visions, the principles of the sect and three hymn texts by Willson, as well as two of the 70 tunes played by the Sharon Temple's organ.

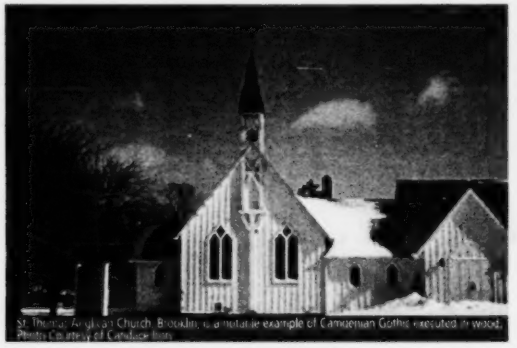
This beautiful, multi-layered 20th-century work, both sacred and secular, is now intimately associated with the extraordinary Sharon Temple.

While Gabrieli might not approve of Beckwith's combination of the traditional and the contemporary, and of religious writing and music, the result, when performed, as it often is, in the Sharon Temple, renders this exceptional building's architecture more alive than frozen – a result that might delight Goethe, as it does many people today.

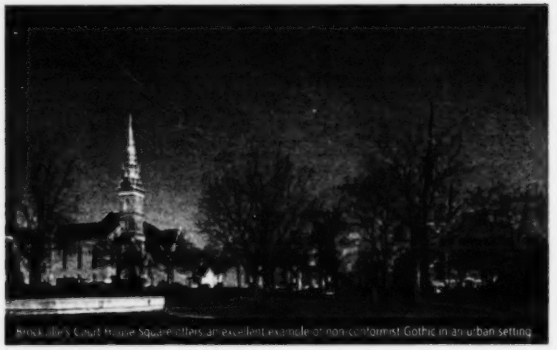
Nicholas Holman is a Torontonian. In a previous life, he was a professional singer.

Gothic traditions in Ontario churches

By Candace Iron and Malcolm Thurlby



St. Thomas Anglican Church, Brooklin, is a notable example of Carpenter Gothic executed in wood. Photos Courtesy of Candace Iron



Brock Jeffs' Court House Square Offices, an excellent example of non-conformist Gothic in an urban setting.

The importance of worship in 19th-century Ontario can be measured by the church buildings erected in the province during that time. Invariably, Ontario denominations turned to the Gothic revival style, as its forms, which represented the cultural values and heritage of their society, could be adapted to meet their specific religious needs.

The revival of Gothic architecture in the early 19th-century found a champion in the English architect and theorist, Augustus Welby Pugin (1812-52). Pugin, a convert to Catholicism, was passionate about Gothic, and believed it was the only appropriate style for churches. Gothic was Christian, whereas the Classical tradition was associated with pagan gods. Pugin's publications, like *The True Principles of Pointed Architecture* (1841), argued for a careful study of medieval Gothic buildings to ensure an accurate revival of the style and constructional techniques of the Middle Ages. His influence can be seen in St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto (1845), where the flat east front with a large pointed and traceried window is based on York Minster. Aside from Sacred Heart in Paris, Ontario (1857), where Pugin's principles are followed assiduously, Catholic churches in the province until the late 1870s follow Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome, but with imitative lath-and-plaster vaults for the nave and aisles. The Irish-trained architect Joseph Connolly (1840-1904) established Pugin's principles at Our Lady Immaculate, Guelph, and on a smaller scale at St. Carthagh's, Tweed, which is based on 13th-century Irish monastic churches.

Pugin's views were shared by many of his Anglican contemporaries. In 1839, some Cambridge undergraduates founded the Camden Society – renamed the Ecclesiological Society in 1846. The Ecclesiologists studied medieval churches and their furnishings with a view to the "restoration of mutilated Architectural remains" and the revival of ritualistic worship in a Gothic setting. Between 1841 and 1868, their views were expressed in a quarterly journal and in pamphlets like *A Few Words to Church Builders*. The Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture was also founded in 1839. The influence of these movements spread rapidly through the English-speaking world. In 1849, the call for the design for St. James's Anglican Cathedral, Toronto, specified the use of the Gothic style. St. James's features details based on Salisbury Cathedral and an open-timber roof of English Gothic origin. This design was quite different from earlier attempts at Gothic revival in Ontario, like Old St. Thomas Anglican, St. Thomas (1822), in which pointed windows and doorways pierce the unarticulated walls of a box-like rectangular plan.

The 13th-century church of St. Michael's, Long Stanton, was advocated by the Ecclesiologists as a model for small Anglican churches througnout the world, calling for a nave with a south porch and smaller chancel to the east, entered through a pointed arch and raised by steps above the nave; a steeply pointed, open-timber roof; and a vestry to the side of the chancel. Examples in Ontario include St. Paul's, Glanford, by Frank Wills; St. John the Baptist, Lyn, by Thomas Fuller, and St. Stephen's-in-the-Fields, Toronto, rebuilt by Henry Langley. Wooden versions of the design exist at Turkey Point and Brooklin. William Hay's All Saints, Niagara Falls, adds a tower to the basic design, and at Grace Anglican, Brantford, Hay used cast-iron columns for the nave arcades, which was followed by Henry Langley in St. George's, Guelph.

The Gothic style was also taken up by Ontario's non-conformists with the publication of F.J. Jobson's *Chapel and School Architecture* (London, 1850), which advocated the adaptation of the Gothic Revival style to the traditions of Wesleyan worship. The central aisle, a key aspect of Anglican Gothic, was eliminated, and the focal point of the church interior became the pulpit, stressing the importance of "the word" in non-conformist worship. The style quickly spread to Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists, all of which adopted the Gothic Revival style, but in a less strict manner than the Anglicans had. Their version is best seen in St. Paul's Presbyterian, Hamilton (1854), where medieval details on a short and wide plan allow for a gallery around three sides of the interior to facilitate focus on "the word." This style was refined with amphitheatre seating, first seen in Ontario at Jarvis Street Baptist, Toronto (1875), by Langley and Burke, a church in which exterior monumentality is enhanced with towers and soires.

Candace Iron is a consulting architectural historian for the Ontario Heritage Trust and a PhD candidate at York University, specializing in Canadian architectural history. Malcolm Thurlby is an internationally distinguished specialist in medieval art and architecture and Canadian architecture, as well as a Professor of Visual Arts at York University.

"The revival of Gothic architecture in the early 19th-century found a champion in the English architect and theorist, Augustus Welby Pugin. Pugin . . . was passionate about Gothic, and believed it was the only appropriate style for churches."

Ontario's postwar places of worship: Modernist designs evoke traditional styles

By Marybeth McTeague

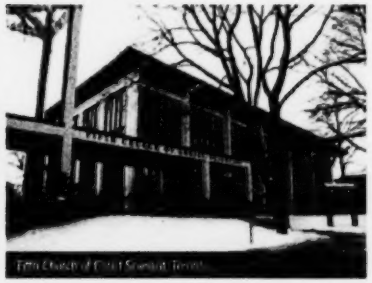
The years following the Second World War were characterized by a sense of renewal and optimism. Places of worship built in Ontario during this period reflected global social and political changes, as well as advances in construction technology and evolving trends in art. Ontario embarked on an era of economic growth enhanced by returning veterans and by new immigrants who infused the province with their diverse cultural traditions.

The sense of progress was reflected in the so-called modern style of architecture. Modernism embraced new construction techniques and new expressive forms. Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church (Renfrew, 1966) is a wonderful example of church architecture breaking free of past constraints and creating something original. The erratic roofline and dramatic diagonal entrance express confidence and faith. In spite of the novelty of the building's design, it is unmistakably a place of worship. The eye-catching roof recalls the daring feats of the Gothic cathedral, panels of stained glass are no longer in decorative tracery, but in simple vertical strips, and the adjacent bell tower has been reinterpreted. Traditional features and associations persist within the modernist "language," providing continuity.

Postwar religious architecture preserved two of the greatest legacies of its predecessors: the commitment to pure geometric form and interrelated proportional systems, and the medieval evolution of structure that culminated in the gravity-defying flying buttresses and stained-glass surfaces of the Gothic style.

These traditional focuses on geometric form and structural daring were central to the principles of modernism. Evolutions in the development of steel, reinforced concrete and laminated wood, originally used in works of engineering such as bridges and railways stations, soon were integrated into churches, concert halls and other types of architecture. Geometric forms had been favoured by the German Bauhaus school in the 1920s as the essence of modern life, the forms' smooth surfaces a rallying cry against the decorative excesses of historic styles. When the Bauhaus was disbanded by the Nazis in 1930, many of its teachers and students fled to England and, ultimately, to North America, carrying these ideals with them.

Congregation Or Shalom Conservative synagogue, London



Fifth Church of Christ Scientist, Toronto

Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Renfrew

St. Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church, Kitchener

The polygonal-shaped Wexford Presbyterian Church, Toronto

Congregation Or Shalom Conservative synagogue (London, Ontario, 1960) is a fine example of the persistence of Renaissance ideals alongside modernism's pursuit of pure geometric form. A circular structure with a flat roof, it claims the honour owing to a place of worship through its fine ashlar stone facing, stained glass and entrance canopy. This last element, built of steel set on impossibly skinny columns, indicates through its curving form a new esthetic language and structural possibility.

Structural expression was most frequently used in places of worship as a means of "associating" with Gothic cathedrals while responding to the needs of post-war congregations. Examples include the steeply pitched gables on the polygonal Wexford Presbyterian Church (Toronto, 1960), as well as the highly original laminated wood structure of Don Valley Bible Chapel (North York, 1968). Stained glass is featured in the latter, but the traditional Bible scenes have been replaced by varied rectangles of coloured glass.

Another example of Gothic-inspired structural daring is St. Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church (Kitchener). Its four-sided plan, a variation on the Greek cross, is capped with a building that is almost entirely roof. Composed of four steeply peaked gables meeting in a cruciform, the roof is tied to the ground by concrete pylons, a modern equivalent of flying buttresses. In place of stained glass held by tracery, clear glass reveals the structural steel trusses supporting the roof.

One of the most elegant translations of the Gothic is Fifth Church of Christ Scientist (Toronto). A modernist flat roof is supported by a series of tapered cast-concrete piers that fold, extending under the broad eaves. Between the piers is the vast expanse of glass typical of medieval cathedrals. The complex, arranged around a courtyard, includes a covered walkway that recalls medieval cloisters and an open steel-frame bell tower.

Postwar places of worship in Ontario present us with a dazzling array of surprising and innovative forms, yet continue the great traditions and associations of the past.

Marybeth McTeague is a Preservation Officer with the City of Toronto.

The challenges of ownership

By Sean Fraser

Historic places of worship may possess cultural heritage values that engender public support for their preservation, but these values sometimes differ from the spiritual and functional needs of their owners and those who worship in them. What an academic or non-believer sees as artistically or architecturally valuable may conflict with what has intense spiritual or personal value for a congregant, not only for reasons of faith but also because of family and community associations built up over many generations. At the same time, Ontario has thousands of underutilized and sometimes dilapidated places of worship that are difficult and expensive to restore and maintain. These issues pose significant challenges to owners faced with making decisions about preservation, re-use or disposal of these buildings or the amalgamation of congregations.

The period 1875 to 1925 witnessed intensive church building in Ontario. This era of Christian optimism coincided with international missionary work in Asia and Africa, as well as remarkable local community outreach by the province's religious groups. So great was the spiritual verve of this era that some churches were built anticipating congregations that never materialized. The period also coincided with an ecumenical spirit among non-conformist or Protestant groups. A town may have boasted Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches, but with the creation of the United Church of Canada some of these buildings became redundant.

Following the mid-20th-century architectural triumphs of modernism, prefabrication and so-called zero-maintenance solutions, there was a tragic shift in theory and practice of facility management. Not only did routine building maintenance decline, but it became impractical as the cost of skilled labour rose dramatically and important traditional skills were no longer widely available. Move forward 50 years, and we see a general erosion of the great Victorian- and Edwardian-era religious monuments. Durable though they have proved to be, whether assaulted by the elements or subjected to modern building "science," the lack of proper maintenance has had a detrimental effect on their condition. The architectural features that make them distinct – tall steeples, copper and slate roofs, elaborate masonry, robust cornices – also require regular attention and repair and, when neglected, eventually become public hazards.

Finding money for capital repairs is a constant struggle for owners, whether individual congregations or large dioceses. Worship itself is typically a higher priority than the preservation of the place of worship. In addition, almost without exception, organized religion engages in charitable community outreach, and funding these initiatives further reduces the pool of money available for stewardship.

Another issue is shifting attendance figures. Although more than 35 per cent of Ontarians attend religious services at least once a month, these rates are dramatically lower than 100 years ago. Moreover, changes in demographics and immigration patterns have altered the religious mosaic of the province. Increased suburbanization and secularization since the mid-20th century have affected the size of urban congregations and shifted populations into new areas. The result is often a large rural church orphaned amid a community that no longer needs or can support it, or an urban church that plays an important social service role but no longer has a viable congregation, yet occupies valuable property with high redevelopment potential.

The nature of ownership is another issue that affects planning for the future of a place of worship. The Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches own property at a corporate or collective level, managing large portfolios that can include hundreds of churches and related properties. Their holdings span many jurisdictions and are subject to different approaches to land use and heritage planning. What is acceptable to one municipal council may be deemed inappropriate in an adjacent one. Moreover, individual congregations may differ over questions related to the preservation, retention or closing of their churches, or their re-use or demolition.

The heritage community still has a long way to go to come to terms with these often overwhelming challenges facing owners of religious heritage properties. Heritage designation alone does not conserve a building, especially one that is vacant and in poor condition. Continued use is important, as is the support of all levels of government and a shared understanding of the problems facing owners. Fundamentally, we need to seek a reasonable and strategic balance between the private needs of ownership and use and the public objectives of architectural conservation.

Sean Fraser is the Ontario Heritage Trust's Manager of Acquisitions and Conservation Services.

The vacant former St. Joachim Roman Catholic Church, Lavaltrie

All Saints Anglican Church, Dundas and Shaftesbury streets, Toronto, delivers

This building in Long Lac, vacant and unused since 2002, was formerly Saint Louis Roman Catholic Church

The challenge of change in the Catholic Diocese of Pembroke

By Bruce Pappin

In May 2006, the Catholic parish of Ste Bernadette in the small northern Ontario community of Bonfield celebrated the 100th anniversary of its church. A highlight was the completion of a five-year renovation of the interior, featuring the installation of a magnificent altar that was an almost exact duplicate of the original removed during the 1960s. Deacon Albert Benoît said the restoration "brought the church alive again." The altar came from the church of St-Louis-de-France in nearby Chiswick, which had been demolished. Its reuse was a bright spot in what has lately been a difficult process for the Diocese of Pembroke and its faithful.

In 2006, the Bishop of Pembroke announced the closure of 10 churches in the diocese, which covers a large area, serving primarily rural communities and small towns. The diocese stretches from Arnprior to outside North Bay, includes a number of communities in Quebec, and extends west as far as Haliburton and south past Bancroft.

Unlike in some communities where church attendance is declining, the Diocese of Pembroke's problems revolve around shifting demographics and a shortage of clergy. Assigning a priest to a geographically isolated community with only a handful of parishioners is not practical.

A diocesan committee composed of lay people and clergy travelled throughout the diocese, consulting with communities about the disposition of inactive churches, and reported back to the Bishop. The final decision in these matters rests with the Bishop, but the wishes of local parishioners are of primary importance.

Sometimes the strongest voice calling for demolition comes from parishioners. In many cases, fear of inappropriate use leads them to see no other option. The committee found, however, that opinions varied widely from place to place. Some communities, for example, had no problem with their former church being used as a garage.

Another challenge is that, by the time a church has to close, there is often no use for a church building in what has become a sparsely populated and economically depressed community. The reuse options available in urban centres do not exist, and leaving an abandoned building to crumble is not a solution. Usually, by the time a church closes, resources have been scarce for years and the building has deteriorated badly.

In some cases, a building's obvious heritage value prompts a recommendation for strenuous preservation efforts. A committee has recently been formed to address the needs of St. Gabriel Church in Springtown, Greater Madawaska. A unique heritage asset, St. Gabriel was closed in the 1950s, and the 1854 building has survived unaltered since its last renovation in 1906.

Often, however, where the heritage value is limited, there is no viable option for reuse, and the community has concerns about the degradation of the building's history through profane use, the only feasible course is that followed in Bonfield and Chiswick, where any movable assets are given new life and the remaining shell is respectfully removed.

Bruce Pappin is a volunteer with the Building and Property Committee of the Diocese of Pembroke, chair of Pembroke's LACAC and board member of Community Heritage Ontario.

Adventures in light and colour

By John Wilcox

Light of the World depicted in stained glass at the St. John the Evangelist in [illegible]

Light is a fundamental aspect of all architecture, especially places of worship. Light has always been considered a manifestation of the spirit, providing guidance, comfort, sustenance and clarity. Of all civilization's achievements in glazing, there is no more inspiring environment than that created by sunlight streaming through the polychromatic brilliance of stained glass.

The magnificence of stained glass was the response of the medieval artist and glazier to the ever-larger openings created by French Gothic architectural accomplishments of the early 12th century. Stained-glass works of art, which continue to be made today, are the culmination of centuries of experimentation. Yet we still make glass for places of worship much as our forebears did all those years ago, mouth-blown on the end of a pipe. Different metallic oxides react with a melted sand batch to create different colours. Selenium is added to create yellow, gold creates a brilliant ruby red and cobalt is the major ingredient of the famous luminescent blues of Chartres. Manganese and, oddly enough, lead can be added to clarify the batch for the manufacture of clear glass. Iron imparts the greeny-turquoise hue of modern float glass.

Sheets of coloured glass are cut to size and shape before being painted and fired for permanent effect. The paint augments the glass's colour and shape, modelling the form and creating figurative scenes. The small painted pieces of multi-coloured glass are then assembled within lead cames (strips), soldered and weatherproofed. The entire process has also changed little over several centuries.

The earliest ecclesiastical windows in Ontario are clear – likely English crown glass, such as is found at the Sharon Temple (1825-31) and the Old Stone Church (1840-53) in Thorah, near Beaverton. This glass was safely shipped from England in barrels of molasses, already cut to size. Coloured glass began arriving shortly thereafter. Using materials at hand, early windows were assembled within wood muntins (strips). Examples include the glorious windows in the chapel of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Convent, Ottawa (1887), designed by Georges Bouillon and re-erected in the National Gallery of Canada in 1988.

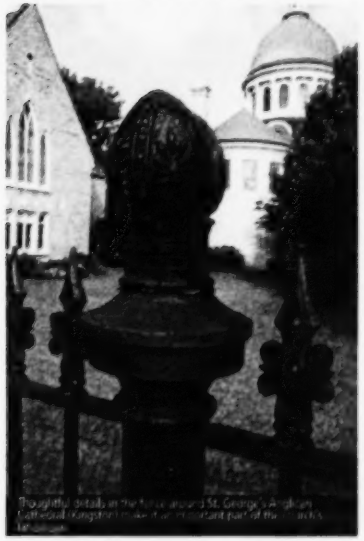
Most 19th- and early 20th-century ecclesiastical stained-glass windows in Ontario are not original artworks; many are renditions of famous paintings. One of the most repeated glass realizations is the pre-Raphaelite masterpiece *Light of the World*, by Holman Hunt (1851) – an appropriate theme for a medium so dependant on light. The original painting was recently on display at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

John Wilcox is a glass artist and conservator with Vitreous Glassworks in Toronto.

Sacred landscapes in Ontario's communities

By Marcus R. Létourneau

While places of worship are a visible aspect of Ontario's heritage, they are part of wider cultural landscapes that can include supporting structures, burial places, view planes, archaeological resources and landscape features. Sites of spiritual significance to First Nations are also cultural landscapes. All of these landscapes promote a broader understanding of not only particular faiths, but also community development and identity. They have multiple, overlapping meanings, and constitute an important part of Ontario's history.



Thoughtful details in the fence around St. George's Anglican Cathedral (Kingston) make it an important part of the church's landscape.

The term "cultural landscape" is complex and has been used in different ways. Geographer James Duncan wrote that a landscape can be understood as "the appearance of an area, the assemblage of objects used to produce that appearance, and the area itself." Religious communities use landscapes to express their beliefs in physical form. As a result, understanding and protecting Ontario's religious and spiritual heritage require a holistic approach.

Religious and spiritual landscapes serve as focal points for many Ontario communities. Churches and their supporting structures were among the earliest constructions in new settlements, and some churches were highly visible local landmarks. Belief systems were expressed through rectories and manses, meeting halls, drive sheds, religious statues and monuments, religious schools, chapels, landscaping and burial grounds.

Many of these landscapes survive in concentrated form. The grounds of St. George's Cathedral in Kingston include the cathedral, the church hall, Lord Sydenham's grave and careful landscaping, including green space. The fence posts are marked by miniature bishops' caps. Nearby are the church office and lower burial ground. In other cases, the interrelated parts of the landscape are spread out. In Minden Hills, the clergy house for St. Paul's Anglican Church sits across the Gull River from the church. Places of worship that are no longer used as such still remind us of the larger landscape they once represented – for example, a former Quaker meeting house in Kingston, now a private residence.

First Nations' spiritual landscapes – such as Serpent Mounds Provincial Park, the Mnjikaning Fish Weirs and Petroglyphs Provincial Park – play an integral part in Ontario's history. These sites, central to First Nations' identities and beliefs, should be considered living landscapes.

Many tools exist to protect the province's religious and spiritual cultural landscapes, including the Planning Act (with its associated Provincial Policy Statement) and the Ontario Heritage Act. To ensure that these landscapes are protected, they must first be identified and community leaders must understand their importance. Initiatives such as Save Our Sanctuaries in Lakeshore indicate how important these landscapes are to our citizens. Many of these sites are dynamic – still occupied and being modified – and appropriately managing change should be a priority. These are among the challenges and opportunities facing supporters of Ontario's past and its future.

Marcus R. Létourneau is Heritage Planner for the City of Kingston and board member for Community Heritage Ontario and the Ontario Association of Heritage Professionals. He recently completed a PhD in historical geography at Queen's University.

From Hamilton, a municipal perspective

By David Cuming

Places of worship are often stunning buildings, constructed in forms and styles that have existed for thousands of years around the world, using specialized techniques and materials. Today, in Hamilton, as in many Ontario municipalities, the challenge is less one of creating new places of worship than of trying to conserve and protect redundant religious buildings that have significant cultural heritage value.

Ontario's 200-year architectural legacy of community worship – Christian worship in particular – has left many municipalities with challenging heritage conservation issues. Hamilton, with its large urban centre and considerable rural hinterland, enjoys a remarkably rich religious heritage. Approximately 20 religious properties in both rural and urban areas of the city have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Accurately determining what we have is critical to successful conservation, planning and management strategies. The City of Hamilton, through the considerable efforts of its Municipal Heritage Committee's Inventory and Research Subcommittee, has embarked on an inventory of its existing places of worship. The first part of the survey, completed in 2007, examined the city's expansive rural and suburban areas, inventorying 95 existing places of worship, as well as 77 that have been lost and 40 that have been constructed since 1967.

Work continues on the inventory, focusing on Hamilton's urban area. Given the diverse cultural mix and the waves of immigrants that settled here, tracing and documenting the places of worship of the city's many religious groups and sects is a complex task. For example, Jewish immigrants who arrived during the 1850s echoed earlier Christian residents' practices of home worship evolving to permanent places of worship such as synagogues, and the establishment of religious schools. Then, throughout the 20th century, non-Judeo-Christian immigrants introduced mosques, gurdwaras and temples, that, while new to Hamilton, drew on centuries of religious tradition.

The new buildings enrich Hamilton's streetscapes. At the same time, vacant places of worship, especially urban Christian churches from the 19th and early 20th centuries, remain a pressing concern. Plagued equally by reduced congregations and dwindling funds, these churches find routine building maintenance immensely difficult. The often monumental size of the buildings, combined with their heating bills and aging materials – stone, stained glass and slate – present huge conservation challenges. Overlay that with the structural toll on aged spires and towers from several Hamilton earthquakes and the prospect could be gloomy.

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church is one of 20 designated places of worship in Hamilton and one of three in the city with an Ontario Heritage Trust conservation easement.

Fortunately, all is not lost. Imaginative, innovative adaptive reuse of redundant places of worship for residential purposes is now common. Municipal grants and loans are also available for heritage conservation purposes. For example, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church was awarded funding from the Downtown Hamilton Heritage Property Grant Program to conduct a building condition survey, as well as loan assistance from the Hamilton Community Heritage Fund for protective work on its stained-glass windows. These developments bring rays of hope to the challenge of preserving the city's rich religious architectural heritage.

David Cuming is Senior Project Manager for Heritage and Urban Design with the City of Hamilton's Planning and Economic Development Department.

Adapting today's places of worship

By Jennifer Laforest

Adaptive reuse of religious buildings can simultaneously preserve significant heritage sites and benefit communities, but in Ontario those who want to make these conversions face political, social and architectural hurdles. With determination and a thoughtful approach, however, they can succeed – as the following case studies demonstrate.

Glebe Community Centre

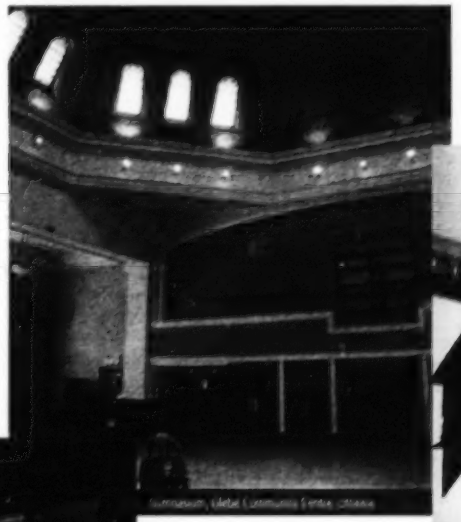
Formerly: St. Paul's Methodist Church
Address: 175 Third Avenue, Ottawa
Built: 1914-24
Adapted: 1972-74 and 2004

Preserving a community hub's "spirit"

A large dome rising above Ottawa's Glebe neighbourhood marks an excellent example of adaptive reuse. St. Paul's Methodist Church – later St. James United Church and now the Glebe Community Centre – was originally designed by Colonel Clarence J. Burritt in the Palladian Revival style. "The building has a monumental copper dome, and is a landmark in a city where domed buildings are rare," says Ian McKercher, Glebe community heritage leader. By the 1960s, the size of the church's congregation had declined and the property was sold to the City of Ottawa, which retained the building as a community centre, making only minor interior alterations. Through the activism of the Glebe Community Association, which had long been vocal about the building's importance to the neighbourhood, major renovations were eventually made to it under the direction of local architect Barry J. Hobin & Associates.

The central space was not subdivided, as sometimes happens with large-volume interiors, but preserved, allowing for flexibility of use and a cost-effective conversion. The original stepped floor was removed, but replaced with patterned hardwood that mirrors the dome's ceiling.

By reusing the former church, the community has benefited from the building's convenient location, distinctive architecture and utility as a community centre. Stuart Lazear, Heritage Planner at the City of Ottawa, describes it as "a community focal point and landmark for cultural and recreational activities in the Glebe neighbourhood." The Glebe Community Centre's successful conversion demonstrates the wisdom of simplicity and minimal intervention in preserving a heritage building of significant character.



Auditorium, Glebe Community Centre, Ottawa

A room, Green Door Bed and Breakfast, Brockville

Green Door Bed and Breakfast

Formerly: Brockville Pentecostal Tabernacle
Address: 61 Buell Street, Brockville
Built: 1928
Adapted: 2005

Regeneration of an art deco classic

The Brockville skyline is graced by steeples and towers that mark the churches of various Christian denominations whose United Empire Loyalist roots extend back to the late 18th century. As in many cities, some historic buildings in Brockville became underutilized as the city's population and businesses moved out of the core. This situation, however, presented Lynne and Peter Meleg with the opportunity, in 2005, to acquire the vacant Brockville Pentecostal Tabernacle. With considerable "sweat equity," they carefully transformed it into the Green Door Bed and Breakfast.

"We wanted to do a bed and breakfast for a while, and when we came across the building we just had to have it," Lynne explains. "We were enamoured with the building, which was a very sound structure with no interior supporting walls, ideal for what we had in mind." Pointing to the location of the former stage, Peter adds, "We thought the stage was a unique feature of the building, and we managed to figure out a way to keep it." The couple transformed the stage into a library, now the focal point of the interior, and used art deco revival decor to augment the former tabernacle's 1920s character.

Fortunately, when the Melegs acquired the building, it was in sound structural condition, possessing a completely open floor plan and a modest scale. These attributes and its location – within walking distance of the city's commercial core – made their project not only possible, but highly successful.

The Glebe Lofts

Formerly: Riverdale Presbyterian Church
Address: 662 Pape Avenue, Toronto
Built: 1912, with a major addition in 1920
Adapted: 1999

Combining religious use and urban housing

Development pressure in urban areas is fuelling the transformation of underutilized and vacant churches into multi-unit residential buildings. This type of conversion, ranging from affordable housing to upscale condos, preserves local landmarks, enhances the streetscape and increases urban density. Builder-developer Robert Mitchell converted the former Riverdale Presbyterian Church in Toronto into the Glebe Lofts. Condominiums occupy the south nave, while the north end remains an active church.

Built in 1920, the Gothic revival building featured high ceilings and exposed steel trusses. Mitchell explains that his design was effectively dictated by the building's original proportions. "The first thing I look at is the distance between the footings. From this I can estimate whether or not excavation for underground parking is feasible." In the third-storey loft unit, the steel trusses remain exposed, providing visual interest and reminding us of the building's original function. While that use has changed, the units benefit from the church's spatial qualities.

The Glebe Lofts took about two and a half years to complete. Conversions in urban areas are often challenging due to the complexity of the planning approvals required. Consequently, Mitchell chooses his projects carefully. He also understands the importance of careful pre-design structural analysis. The success of 662 Pape shows that a community's architectural heritage has market appeal, and that religious use can coexist with residential redevelopment.

Vogan Residence

Formerly: Wesleyan Methodist Church
Address: 332 Kettleby Road, Kettleby (King Township)
Built: 1873
Adapted: 1966

Creating a home in a former church

The Vogan home at 332 Kettleby Road is not a typical house – it occupies the village of Kettleby's former Wesleyan Methodist church. Wesleyan Methodist became a United Church in 1925 and continued in religious use until the mid-1960s, when it was sold and became a private residence.

Gary Vogan, the present owner, notes that "the church was not designed to live in," as the original space did not have plumbing, electricity or storage. Introducing these elements to a building can be challenging.

Other changes were made to facilitate occupancy. Rooms and a mezzanine were framed with beams salvaged from an old barn. When the original foyer was replaced, the Vogans discovered that the building code required that the piping run vertically. This stipulation led to the construction of a full fireplace that contains all of the services. Although the changes were functional, they did not detract from the interior's original quality. The front room of the home remains open-concept, enabling the Vogans to display their extensive collection of Canadiana.

Both exterior and interior adaptations were contextual in their execution, enhancing Kettleby's vernacular architecture. Modest, they also demonstrate the value of "contained" alterations to neighbourhood heritage. Part of the Vogans' success is that they took an additive and reversible approach to converting this unheated country church, working within the building envelope to keep costs down and to preserve the building's scale.

Church Restaurant

Formerly: Mackenzie Memorial Gospel Church
Address: 70 Brunswick Street, Stratford
Built: 1873-74
Adapted: 1975

Offering fine dining in an inspirational setting

The former Mackenzie Memorial Gospel Church in Stratford occupies an ideal location, only a short walk from the town's famous theatres. This location, and the building's attractive interior architectural features, inspired its transformation into the Church Restaurant.

Owner Mark Craft believes that the original building's structural integrity was instrumental in the success of this difficult conversion. The largest architectural alteration was the introduction of a commercial kitchen into a former crawl space. Some original footings remain intact in an area of the crawl space that now houses the restaurant's wine cellar. The pews were used to create seating platforms around the dining area's perimeter. Also adorning the interior are original light fixtures and stained-glass windows. The restaurant's dark wood furniture harmonizes with the wooden trusses, which retain their Victorian finish.

The alterations appropriately balance the restaurant's needs with the building's original character. The open volume and finishes have been preserved, while respecting the private-public divisions and natural servicing opportunities inherent in the church plan. The dramatic restaurant interior perfectly complements the Stratford theatre experience. Although the transformation occurred over 30 years ago, the Church Restaurant and its upstairs sister restaurant, the Belfry, remain one of Ontario's best examples of the conversion of a historic property into a hospitality venue.

St. George's Greek Orthodox Church

Formerly: Holy Blossom Temple
Address: 115 Bond Street, Toronto
Built: 1897
Adapted: 1937

Adapting one faith's building for another faith

Located in the heart of Toronto, St. George's Greek Orthodox Church remains one of very few examples of Byzantine inspired architecture in the city. Built as Holy Blossom Temple, a Jewish synagogue, the building was originally designed by Canadian architect John Siddall. In the early part of the 20th century, its façade was adorned with two large onion-shaped domes atop two large towers, as well as several smaller onion domes along the central frontispiece. Due to the rapid growth of its congregation in the 1930s, Holy Blossom relocated to a new building (at 1950 Bathurst Street, Toronto), and its former home was sold and converted into this Greek Orthodox church.

The most notable exterior change was the replacement of the original onion domes with a hemispherical dome inspired by Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The drum of the central dome was altered again in the 1980s to feature a stained-glass clerestory. Around the same time, the façade's central tympanum was refitted with a mosaic painted by celebrated Italian mosaicist Sirio Tonelli and the traditional iconography in the church's interior was painted by Pacomaios monks from Mount Athos in Greece.

The successful conversion of Holy Blossom Temple to St. George's Greek Orthodox Church demonstrates that faith-to-faith building conversions are often an easy fit. It also reminds us of the practical origins of adaptive reuse. We consider the adaptation of religious buildings a new trend, but the spirit of reusing and recycling them has always been part of our religious heritage.

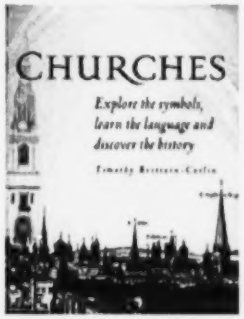
Jennifer Laforest is a graduate student in urban planning at Ryerson University and an Ontario Heritage Trust intern.

Places of Worship resources

Publications

Churches: Explore the symbols, learn the language and discover the history, by Timothy Brittain-Catlin.

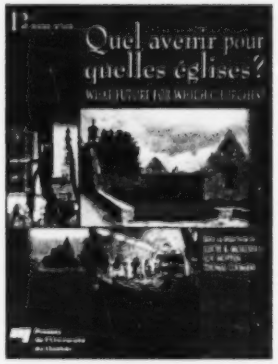
Collins Press. Churches and cathedrals, intentionally imposing and dignified, contain a wealth of fascinating architectural detail and symbols to interpret. They reflect a magnificent vista of history across the centuries, and are an important part of our cultural heritage.



Churches is a practical, explanatory guide as well as a superbly illustrated book with an enchanting narrative. It explains everything from how to interpret specific religious features to explaining the church layout, and from looking at the church in context of local history, to the different styles of church architecture.

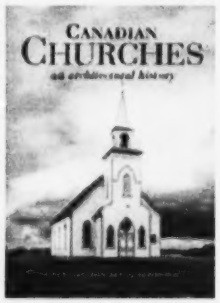
Become fluent in the language of churches and appreciate their beauty and variety in a new way. Understanding the symbols within churches and cathedrals is like learning a new language, translating the meaning and purpose of features within these spectacular buildings is an important, and enlightening, part of visiting a church.

Quel avenir pour quelles églises? What future for which churches? under the direction of Lucie K. Morisset, Luc Noppen and Thomas Coomans.



Presses de l'Université du Québec. Throughout the Western world, many churches of all religious traditions are closing their doors due to a lack of worshippers and officiants. These mainstays of our cities and towns and chroniclers of our memories are in danger of disappearing in the somewhat near future. Heritage continues to crumble, with nearly 2,000 churches closed in England, billions of unused or lost land assets in the United States, and more than 600 churches demolished in the Netherlands. Tens of thousands of churches in Scandinavia, Germany, Belgium and France are also clamouring for our attention, while their Quebec counterparts have faced steadily declining parishioners' interest for the past several years.

Forty-odd North American and European specialists share their experiences and make suggestions regarding the future and ownership of these noble buildings, as well as their purpose and use. They also describe the challenges of urban planning and managing such buildings, and explore new approaches that will help churches survive by redefining their purpose and status within the community. In the end, the issue is one of understanding how churches can again become the heritage of the entire community.



Canadian Churches: An architectural history, by Peter Richardson and Douglas Richardson, with photographs by John de Visser.

Firefly Books. This book is the first definitive guide to more than 250 of the most beautiful and significant churches across the country. Encompassing many styles and many denominations, *Canadian Churches* tells the story of settlers with Old World traditions arriving in a New World landscape, and how these traditions evolved over time as the country moved west.

Canadian Churches provides a detailed view of our spiritual, ethnic and architectural heritage by providing a history for each church, including the construction, subsequent alterations or additions, the early congregation and any architectural details considered to be unique and noteworthy.

Illustrated throughout with specially commissioned photographs, artwork, drawings and illustrations, this book is a must for anyone interested in history, architecture and religion.

Web resources

Canada

Religious Heritage Restoration Programme
www.patrimoine-religieux.qc.ca
Outlines the forms of financial assistance and support available to religious heritage restoration projects in Quebec through the Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec and the Ministere de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition feminine

Prairie Churches Project
www.thomassillfoundation.com/prairie.html
A 2003 project of the Thomas Sill Foundation in Manitoba where significant historic rural churches were identified and preserved with technical assistance from the provincial Historic Resources Branch

Hamilton's Heritage, Volume 7a Part A: Inventory of Places of Worship: Ancaster, Beverly, Binbrook, Dundas, East Flamborough, Glanford, Saltfleet, and West Flamborough
www.myhamilton.ca
Contains information on church typologies and development of architectural style with records of places of worship found in Ancaster, Beverly, Binbrook, Dundas, East Flamborough, Glanford, Saltfleet and West Flamborough, including construction and alteration details, history and reference materials for each

United States

Partners for Sacred Places
www.sacredplaces.org
Based in Philadelphia, this Website provides information and guidance to congregations and communities to sustain and use historic sacred places

National Trust for Historic Preservation: Historic Houses of Worship
www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-houses-of-worship
Outlines the stance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation on the conservation and repurposing of historic houses of worship, including resources and interactive features for those involved in preservation projects

Historic Boston Incorporated – The Steeples Project
www.historicboston.org/steeples_project.htm
The Steeples Project raises funds from charitable foundations and awards the money in the form of matching grants to congregations in Boston that are seeking to preserve their historic houses of worship

United Kingdom

The Churches Conservation Trust
www.visitchurches.org.uk/content.php?nID=1
Provides an overview of the Churches Conservation Trust, which cares for Anglican churches in the United Kingdom no longer being used as places of worship

English Heritage: Places of Worship
www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1057
Provides an overview of the policies and activities of English Heritage as they relate to historic places of worship in England, with links to information on redundant churches and cathedrals, plus available grants for conservation projects

Historic Chapels Trust
www.hct.org.uk
A non-profit advocacy group that purchases and restores historic places of worship not owned or protected by the Churches Conservation Trust